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ABSTRACT

This brochure, developed by a manufacturer of wooden blocks and trains, offers advice on the selection and use of toy blocks with children. The guide asserts that blocks, while often thought of as the most simple of toys, have great strength as creativity builders. Topics discussed in the brochure include: "Why We Want Our Children to Play"; "Why We Want Them to Play with Toys"; "What Is Creativity?"; "Why Are Some People More Creative than Others?"; "A Word about Safety"; "Why Blocks Are Perfect for Exercising Creativity"; "Different Blocks for Different Children"; "Stages of Development in Block Play"; "How We Can Help Our Children Play"; "Why Buy a Quality Set of Blocks?"; various kinds of blocks; and a brief history of toy manufacturer T.C. Timber. (EV)

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A Parent's Guide To Imaginative Block Play

ED 415 007

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Why Blocks Are Still One Of America's Favorite Toys

t.c.timber
Timeless Quality, Endless Fun - Since 1936

Presented by ***T.C.Timber,*** *makers of fine handcrafted hardwood blocks, trains, and playsets that last for generations.*

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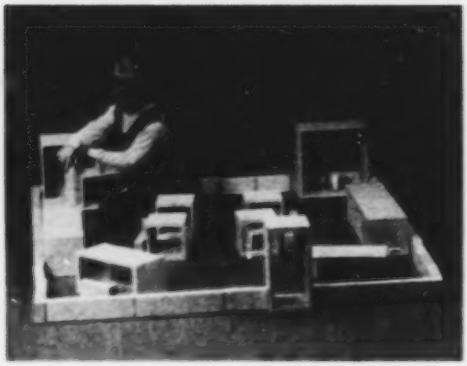
The Premier Manufacturer Of Wooden Blocks And Trains

A Parent's Guide To Creative Block Play

Why We Want Our Children To Play

As adults, we all want our children to play. We want them to enjoy and appreciate those wonderful years of childhood that pass all too quickly. As parents and educators, we know that a child's play is essentially a learning experience. Play is experimentation and taking joy in the mastery of objects and tasks. Play gives children some of the most fundamental building blocks in the foundation of a life-long learning process.



Understanding some of the basic concepts of math, even if the child does not associate them with the subject itself, can help him or her when they begin organized and structured learning. Social skills are also a vital part of early learning. Play that simulates social settings and stimulates social interaction aids in pre-school preparedness.

Play also gives children an outlet for their boundless energy. Children need to run and jump, and to make projects that mess up the entire living room. They exercise their minds while they are exercising their bodies. Play benefits the whole child. But, the simple fact that they do play is not enough. In order to get the maximum benefit from playing, they need to play with the right things. What they play with is almost as important as the fact that they play at all.

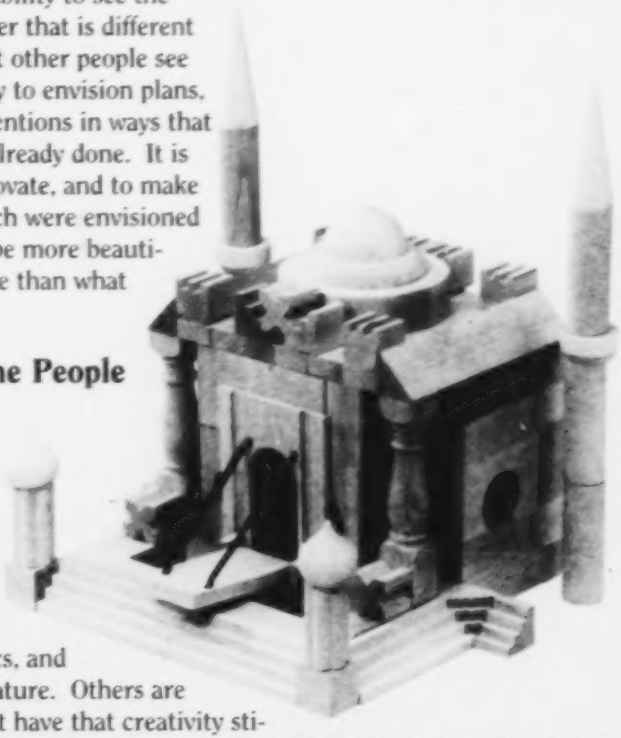
Why We Want Them To Play With Toys

Children will play with almost anything. But as we all know, some things are better to play with than others. A good set of blocks will teach a child more than a pile of scrap lumber. The blocks are uniform shapes and sizes, and give a better introduction to mathematical relationships than the random size and assortment of the scrap. Toys are designed with the

safety of children in mind. Toy blocks are splinter-free, with square edges and no sharp points. A toy tea set allows children to act out social situations with accessories that are just the right size for little hands. Besides, that good set of your grandmother's china is already missing three tea cups and the butter plate. Children need toys to be free in their creativity.

What Is Creativity?

Creativity is the ability to see the world in a manner that is different from the way that other people see it. It is the ability to envision plans, pictures, and inventions in ways that others have not already done. It is the ability to innovate, and to make those things which were envisioned work better and be more beautiful and productive than what they were before.



Why Are Some People More Creative Than Others?

Some people do have an inner sense of aesthetics, and are creative by nature. Others are born creative, but have that creativity stifled by others who criticize, or by a society that teaches them that creativity is best left to artists and thinkers. In effect, many of us are taught not to be creative.

We believe that all children are creative to some degree. Those that are truly gifted are the ones who are able to retain that creativity through the encouragement and reinforcement of those creative powers during their early years. These are the people who become artists and architects, craftspeople and industry leaders. This ability to be creative is sought after and rewarded in our society.

Playing with blocks (or any toy for that matter) will not make your child more creative. What it will do is allow the natural creativity that they do have to blossom and grow. Playing with blocks will reinforce the idea that the child's own creativity is valid, and is something worth pursuing.

The best way to develop any skill or ability is to exercise and use that skill or ability. If a person wants to be a better ball player, he or she must play ball. If a person wants to be a better writer, he or she must write. The same is true for creativity. If a child is to be more creative, they must create. Since most children naturally enjoy being creative, the same thing can be accomplished by a parent or care giver encouraging creative play.

Why Do We Want Our Children To Exercise

Choke Tube - A standard fixture to test for dangerous small parts. An object is placed in the tube. If it can fit entirely into the tube, the part is too small for a child under three years of age.

A Word About Safety

Safety should be a primary concern when you choose a toy for your child. All products from T.C.Timber conform to federal standards for safety including the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard F-963, VPS PS-72, and the Consumer Products Safety Commission standards. Look for non-toxic paints, stains, and finishes.

Check the age grading on the outside of the package. Age grading is normally based on the safety standards as well as the developmental level of the child. For example, children under 3 should not play with objects that can fit into the choke tube as they may choke. Toys labeled for over 3 years of age may be referring to small parts in the toy in addition to a toy that is enjoyed by a three year old. (see picture at left) Even if you are convinced that your child is exceptional, a toy designed for an older child may not be safe for your child even if they can understand it conceptually.

Before you let a child play with a toy, take a minute to look the toy over. Be sure that there are no small parts, sharp points or edges, and that the toy is appropriate for your child. Worn or broken toys should be removed from play, and repaired or discarded.

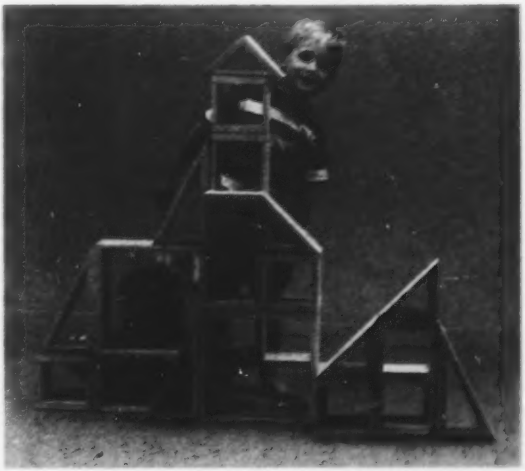
A good way to see if a toy is appropriate is to get right down on the floor and play with it with your child. From this vantage point, you can more easily see if the child is getting frustrated, or if the toy seems dangerous. Your judgment is more important than any recommendation.

For a free copy of "Which Toy for Which Child (Birth - 5 years & 6 - 12 years) as well as other valuable information, write to U.S.Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington DC 20207

This Creativity?

We all enjoy feeling a sense of accomplishment; that feeling that we get when we know that a job has been well done. Children enjoy the same sense of accomplishment when they exercise their creativity. Building a tower for the first time, or arranging a particularly pleasing imaginary garden just feels good. This sense of accomplishment gives children a feeling of self worth, and emphasizes the value of their individuality. Another benefit; once they have accomplished something, it becomes easier for them to understand the personal importance of accomplishment. They begin to respect the accomplishments of others along with respecting their own achievements.

Exercising creativity is also one of the best ways to learn. When children are experimenting with blocks, paints, or almost anything, they are also learning about math, science, physics, aesthetics, and the social sciences. They might not be able to quote Isaac Newton's theory of gravity, but they know very well what happens if a block is not balanced properly at the top of a structure.



Why Blocks Are Perfect For Exercising Creativity

Some toys are better than others at coaxing creativity out of a child. Paint-by-number sets do not require that the child be creative. Building sets that are designed to build a single object require only that the child can duplicate what he or she sees on the box or the instructions. These sets do have their place in the child's toy box. For many children they are enjoyable and challenging. Children learn to follow instructions, and gain fine motor skills by completing the projects. While following instructions is a necessary skill, it is certainly not a creative skill.

Highly detailed toys do not promote creativity. A toy X-11 jet fighter that

has all the markings and details of the real thing is difficult to imagine as being anything else. Plastic action figures that are featured on a Saturday morning cartoon show mostly encourage the child to duplicate the plots and actions that they have witnessed on television. While some children do create new and different stories for the figures to act out, they are still constrained to the characters created for the action figure. Creativity is not a necessary component of playing with the toy.

By contrast, blocks are often thought of as the most simple of toys. This facet, while seeming to be a detriment, is actually one of the greatest strengths of blocks as creative toys. A simple block can be a house, a dock, a car, an airplane, a dragon, or a doctor making his rounds, complete with lab coat and stethoscope. There is nothing to prevent the child from imagining anything they want.

Because they are not detailed, the child is able to (and indeed required to) make up or create the design, the plot, the characters, and the action. Through imagination, the child is able to mold the reality of block play to suit almost any situation. Creativity is inspired and enhanced.

Blocks are one of the few toys that can offer a creative outlet to a wide range of ages...

This does not mean that blocks have to be incredibly simple to be effective. Indeed, as a child grows, he or she wants toys to be more complex, and to a degree, more detailed. Blocks continue to be good creative toys at these older ages. Blocks with patterns on them, or in different shapes (triangles, hexagons, and spheres) can be added to an older set of blocks to make the sets new. The child can once again enjoy playing with them.

Blocks are one of the few toys that can offer a creative outlet to a wide range of ages. Even adults enjoy playing with a set of pattern or architectural blocks. (see pages 20 and 22-25) It is not unusual for a child to rediscover the set of colored blocks with simple shapes that they have set aside for months or years, and to proceed to create new and different structures that continue to challenge their skill and excite their imagination.

Different Blocks For Different Children

As children grow, their developmental needs change. Younger children want to play with simple blocks because their ability to organize and build is not yet well developed. Older children want more blocks in a set, and try adding new accessories from other play sets. They build more complex structures, and their imaginary reality can hold more details. Following are some brief descriptions of some different age levels, and examples of the type of blocks that can best stimulate a child's imagination and creativity. This information has been drawn mostly from the booklets *Which Toys for Which Child (Birth - Age 5 & 6 - 12 years)* referenced at the end of the section.

➤**Ages 0 - 6 months** — Young infants are constantly learning about the world around them. They start by following an object with their eyes. They enjoy watching others play with blocks for their viewing pleasure. Soon, they want to touch and manipulate the blocks for themselves. For this age group a few soft blocks (cloth or foam) are best. They are easy to grasp, and the child cannot hurt themselves with them. Studies have shown that blocks with black & white patterns on them are the most interesting for children of this age.

➤**Ages 7-12 months** — This is the age when a child begins to develop a "pincer" type grip using the thumb and forefinger. They use this grip to grasp and hold objects with one hand while they manipulate the object with the other.

Stages Of Development In Block Play

Research has shown that children between the ages of two and six pass through seven specific stages of block building. Harriet Johnson, in her book *The Art of Block Building* describes the following stages typical of this age span.

Stage 1 — The young child merely carries the block around with him/her.

Stage 2 — The child builds with repetition, either in rows or by stacking.

Stage 3 — The child now constructs a bridge - two blocks connected by a third.

Stage 4 — Next, enclosures are constructed around a central space.

Stage 5 — At this point, decorative and sometimes symmetrical designs or patterns are built.

Stage 6 — Children will then name their structures, and use them to act out scenarios.

Stage 7 — Children finally reproduce structures that they are familiar with in detail, and use them to act out dramatic play.

Soft blocks are still good for this age, as are simple wooden blocks with smooth edges and rounded corners. The child now finds bright, primary colors stimulating. (See Baby's First Blocks, page 14 of this guide)

➤**Age 1 year** — At this age, children are involved in more exploratory play. They love to push, pull, load and dump. They also develop an interest in playing with multiple objects at the same time. For this age a small set of brightly colored blocks (15-25 pieces), or a set of blocks that interlock are perfect. The small set should now contain different shapes (primarily different sized rectangles) so the child can start to understand the differences between one block and another. The interlocking blocks make the learning experience of stacking and building less frustrating. When a child succeeds at something, they are more willing to continue playing and learning. At this age the child is beginning to gain some understanding of physical concepts such as gravity. (See Baby's First Builders, page 14 of this guide)

Older children want more blocks in a set. They build more complex structures, and their imagination can hold more details.

➤**Age 2 years** — At this age, children have acquired most of their large muscle skills. They have moved from gross motor development to fine motor development, and concentrate more on projects that require good hand–eye coordination. They build more complex structures, and a larger set of blocks is desirable (30-40 pieces). Larger blocks, such as unit blocks, allow them to enjoy building large structures. They appreciate some of the mathematical concepts associated with unit blocks such as equivalence (two of these equals one of those). For multiple children interacting, block sets of 50-60 pieces give them enough blocks to build together and work on their social skills. (See Colored Blocks, Unit Blocks, and Table Unit Blocks, pages 15, 17, and 16 of this guide)

➤**Ages 3 - 5 years** — At this age, children enjoy tests of skill. They are increasing their fine motor skills, and have become more expert builders. For this child, larger sets of blocks offer more excitement and challenge (50-70 pieces). They enjoy play with very large cardboard or hollow blocks, and can build complex structures with them. The large structures can be used by several children while they all delight in admiring, modify-

ing, and adding to them. (See Hollow Blocks, page 19 of this guide). Children of this age also enjoy playing with blocks that have pattern making capabilities. They can create and enjoy a variety of simple patterns. (:e Colored Blocks, Hollow Blocks, and Timber Tiles/Colorful Collage, pages 15, 19, & 20 of this guide)

➤**Ages 6 - 8 years** — Children of this age are more interested in creating "finished products." They like to create a project that has more permanence. With blocks, they enjoy even larger sets (100+ pieces). They want to make complex structures and leave them set up for days at a time.

Six year-olds play with Pattern Blocks

They are more concerned with "getting it right," and actively seek praise and acceptance for their creativity. Larger pattern making sets with more defined mathematical relationships challenge them. They gain a greater appreciation for the mathematical and aesthetic relationships. Detail becomes more important, and they are able to relate their building more directly with other topics such as mathematics, architecture and physics. (See Pattern Blocks , Counting Bars & Squares, and Master Builder Blocks, pages 20, 21, & 22-24 of this guide)

For a more detailed description of the appropriate toys for different ages, as well as a wealth of good information on child safety, please write for the free booklet "Which Toy for Which Child (Birth - 5 years & 6 - 12 years) from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington DC 20207, or call toll free 1-800-638-CPSC.

How We Can Help Our Children Play

Now that we have described some of the tools that children can use to exercise their creativity, here are a few tips that you can use to help them to get the most benefit from that play. Since there is no set way for children to play, there are no specific instructions for parents or caregivers to help them to play. Just like the play itself, helping our children to play is a series of general guidelines, and a "figure it out as you go along" sort of proposition. Educators and psychologists do agree on some guidelines, but advise that these guidelines be adjusted to suit the individual child as well as the situation.

The first bit of advice is to spend some of a child's play time down on the floor with them. Let them know that you care about their play, and that you enjoy participating in it. (You will enjoy participating in it.) Don't always just get out the toys, give them a few words of encouragement, and go about your business. This is fine for many times when the duties and obligations of life make it necessary. Children do enjoy creating on their own or with other children. But do make a conscious effort to spend some time on their level, for the child as well as for yourself. (Getting down on the floor and playing with children is a great way to relieve stress.)

Do your best to avoid a grownup's natural tendency to make the child "do it right." Remember that this is their play time, and allow them to set the stage and define the realities involved. Since you are trying to promote creativity, making them adhere to strict reality may be counter-productive. It is perfectly acceptable when the toy cat does the grocery shopping, or when the fire truck looks more like a school bus than a hook and ladder. Be a participant instead of a leader, and accept with enthusiasm the script that the child writes.

This is *not* to say that there shouldn't be rules. Rules such as "no hitting", "don't play with items that are valuable or easily broken",

Support Your Local Specialty Retailer

Many people shop for their children's toys at large discount chain stores. Their reasoning is that they can get more toys for the money. This is fine if you know exactly what you want and what a good price for the toy should be. If you are unsure as to what to buy, or need some advice about an item, chances are that you will be out of luck. The clerk may be able to tell you which toys they sell the most of, but they probably don't know how to play the game or whether the manufacturer has a good reputation or not. Their greatest concern is to get the highest volume of toys out the door as quickly as possible. That is how they keep their prices low.

By contrast, specialty toy stores are often owned and operated by individuals who know the product intimately, and who care about their customers and their children. They choose their product mix more carefully, basing it on what they would feel comfortable with their children playing with, rather than what they can sell the most of.

Their staff is more likely to take the time to listen to your situation, and to make valid recommendations about the toys and games you purchase. They know how to play the games, and what ages the toys are appropriate for. Since they talk with many customers and manufacturers, their knowledge is a valuable resource that can steer you towards the toys that can most benefit your child.

One of the ways to know one of these quality retailers is to look for the ASTRA symbol on their door or window. ASTRA stands for American Specialty Toy Retailers Association. Members are concerned with all of the issues that we have discussed, and are committed to give both you and your child quality service.

Please keep these things in mind when you prepare to shop for your child's next toy. In America, you still generally get what you pay for.

and "share with your brother", are necessary. They help the child to understand concepts that are essential to adhere to all of the time. The rules of the house don't have to go out the window to bolster creativity.

Don't make it become work. If the children are not having fun, stop what is happening and move on to something else. It is fine to try to make picking up the toys or raking the leaves more fun. It makes the job go faster and work become more enjoyable for everyone. Turning work into play is one of the great secrets of enjoying life. However, this activity is not the creative, unstructured play that we have been talking about.

Praise the accomplishments of the child, keeping in mind their age and developmental level. It may be no great accomplishment for someone to draw a tree, and to put the leaves, roots, and trunk in the right place. But for a three year old, this is like you or I suddenly being able to comprehend the concept of infinity, or the seventh dimension. For the child, it is a real achievement. Compliment them accordingly, and encourage them to impress you again. You know how good you feel when someone acknowledges something that you have done. Share this with your child, and watch how it spurs them on.

Finally, make sure that you provide them with the proper tools to assist in achieving their new goals. If the child enjoys creating with paint and crayons, make sure that they have a ready supply. If they enjoy role playing, get them costume and prop material. During the early years, make sure that they have access to a variety of different materials and activities, so that they can try many new things before they concentrate their play on fewer areas.

Sometimes the child may not know what they want to play with. Try to be creative yourself, and have ideas prepared for those times when "I'm bored" slips too easily from their lips. The children's book section of your local library is a good place to start. So is the next section...

A Short List Of Ideas To Get You Started

Having a little difficulty being creative? Following are some examples of things that you and your child can do with a set of blocks. They are only a beginning, but they should get you started.

- Build your own house out of blocks. Use blocks to represent people, and have them move about and interact. Have them all hop into the car (another block) and take a trip to the store. What will they buy? Why did they all go? Have them drive home again and put away or use the things that they bought.

- Have the children been anywhere fun lately? The Zoo? The Park? Build something that they saw there. Act out what they did.

- "Draw" people's faces on the floor using blocks. Which blocks are good for the eyes? The nose? Have the children take turns adding parts to the face and see what the finished picture looks like. Do you have enough blocks to draw the rest of the body? Draw other pictures, using the blocks for lines and circles.

- Make up a game using the blocks as pieces. Perhaps the children can take turns stacking blocks until the pile falls over.

- Make recycling bins out of blocks. A different shape or color goes in each bin. Those blocks that don't go into any of the bins go into the trash bin. (Not the real trash bin!)

- Keep score during a game using the blocks for counters. Smaller ones can be "ones", while larger ones can be "fives" or "tens." Discuss counting, and how one "ten" block can be exchanged for ten "one" blocks.

Why Buy A Quality Set Of Blocks

There are many different sets of blocks on the market today. You may wonder if it is worth the cost to purchase one of the higher quality ones. Consider the following points:

1. Higher quality blocks are less frustrating. They are made to more exacting standards and fit together better. The angles are more true, and larger structures can be built with them.

2. Higher quality sets offer more learning value. Blocks based on a system, such as unit blocks or pattern blocks, work together better than blocks designed at random, or to sell for a specific price. Each block is designed to work well with others in the set. These are the sets that can also be used to teach math and physics when the child is ready to learn.

3. Higher quality blocks are safer. They are made to more exacting quality control standards, and are less likely to have splinters or rough edges. Assembled parts are put together better, and are less likely to break, leaving small parts for a child to choke on.

4. Higher quality blocks last longer. Maple blocks last many times longer than pine blocks. Quality finishes are less likely to chip or bleed, and the color will stay bright longer. They are also much less likely to break, leaving sets intact to be passed down to the next generation of children.

- Make a map of your neighborhood. Use different blocks for houses, stores and schools. Make streets out of blocks, and drive on them with block cars to go to the store or visit a friend's house.

- Use blocks to build the room that you are in. Use different blocks to represent tables, chairs, counters and book cases. Rearrange the room to your liking.

- Build a maze and try to slide a block from the entrance to the exit without touching any of the other blocks. Tie one block to a piece of string. Dangling the block from above the maze, try to navigate the maze without touching any of the other blocks.

- Have two children each decide on something to build. Don't tell each other what it is. Take turns placing one block at a time. See what ends up being built.

- Set up ramps, and roll or slide blocks down them. Build sides for the ramp so that blocks don't fall off halfway down. Build a tower at the bottom of the ramp, and try to knock it down by sliding or rolling a block down the ramp.

- Hide the blocks like Easter eggs and have a block hunt. Each child may have to find their own color or shape.

- Set all the blocks on the floor end to end. Can you go all the way from the kitchen to the living room?

- Take small pictures that you have drawn or colored and tape them to blocks. Set up an art gallery. Have other blocks be people walking through the gallery and talking about what they like about each picture.

- Choose different pieces of furniture in the room to represent houses where children live. Choose blocks to be the children. Make one of the largest blocks (or a shoebox) be the school bus. Drive the bus around the room and pick up the children. Did you remember to choose a block for the driver?

- See how long a bridge you can build. Drive cars and trucks over it.

- Set the blocks up in a pattern like dominoes. Knock the first one down and see if all the rest fall over in order.

- Pick one block to be the "pusher". Lay all the other blocks flat on the floor. Use the pusher to move the other blocks around without touching them. Make a pattern or spell a word.

- Build a set of stairs so that a doll or stuffed animal can climb up onto the couch.

- Put the blocks on the floor in a pattern. While one person hides their eyes, the other person moves or removes one or two blocks. The first person tries to guess which blocks were moved/removed.

- Make a playground out of blocks. The slide and seesaw should be easy. How could string or tape be used to make the swings, monkey bars and merry-go-round?
- Read a short story to the child. Have the child build something from the story out of blocks. Have the child tell the story back to you while acting it out with the block structure.
- Make an airport out of blocks. Have paper airplanes take off and land.
- Use the blocks as templates to trace around. Use a pencil or crayon to draw something that has been built on a large piece of paper. Color the picture.
- Use blocks to make a graph. Stack different color blocks up to show how many different colored objects are in the room (One red block for each red object, etc.)

A Word From T.C.Timber

We hope that this booklet has been educational and informative. Although it has been brief, we hope that the information we have presented will spur you to encourage the creative types of play that parents and educators have long believed give great benefits to young children.

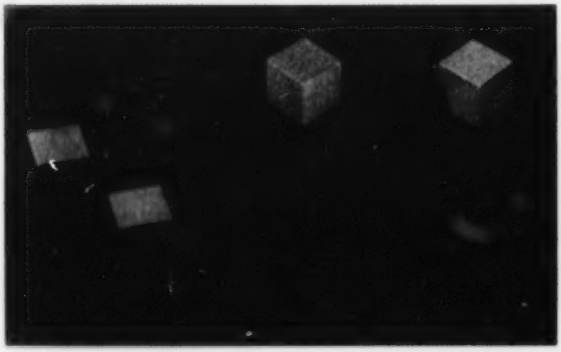
By remarkable coincidence, we also happen to manufacture a large number of the block sets that have been discussed in this booklet. The next few pages are a sampling of the wide variety of blocks, trains, accessories and playsets that we manufacture right here in Skaneateles, NY. If you have questions or comments, or would like to find a source for these high quality toys, please call us at 1-800-468-6873. We will be happy to assist you.

Visit our *Web Site* to learn more about all our high quality hardwood toys at **www.tctimber.com**.

Blocks For The Very Young

Children are curious about blocks from a very early age. At six months infants already have a desire to touch and grasp. Baby's first blocks should be simple and colorful.

50-6540 Baby's First Blocks
A set of blocks for the infant. These 12 simple cubes are in 6 basic colors for the infant to hold, and to learn the basics of stacking.
Age: 6 Mos & Up



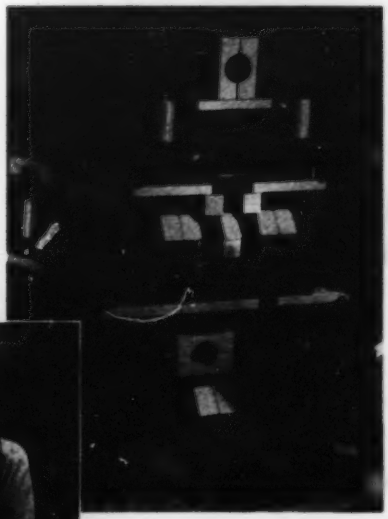
When children get a little older, say twelve months or so, they have the desire to stack blocks and build simple structures. Making this task easier helps to build their confidence.

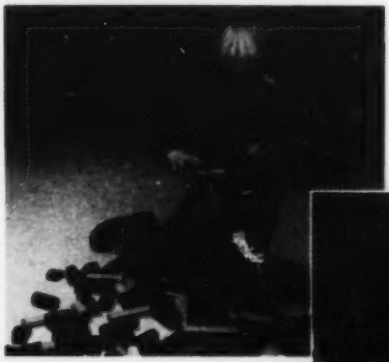
50-6512 Baby's First Builders
This 13 piece set features large blocks with interlocking dowels to ease the frustration of early block play.
Age: 12 Mos & Up

Colored Blocks

Box-O-Blox - Color Finish

Safe, non-toxic finishes
Durable Hardwood
Bright primary colors
Safe for young children
(30mm) Approximate cube size: $1^{3}/_{16}$" x $1^{3}/_{16}$" x $1^{3}/_{16}$"
Ages: 18 Months and Up





50-6515 Box O' Blox
171 Blocks in 11 shapes and 4 colors
50-6514 Box O' Blox
85 Blocks in 11 shapes and 4 colors
50-6510 Box O' Blox
43 Blocks in 11 shapes and 4 colors

Completely Safe
Non-toxic Finishes
Will not chip or flake

Colored 25mm Blocks
Hardwood blocks, slightly smaller than in the Box O' Blox, but with the same safe, durable, bright finish.
Approximate cube size: 1" x 1" x 1"

50-7200 Colored 25mm Blocks
40 pieces, 9 shapes, 4 colors
50-7201 Colored 25mm Blocks
80 pieces, 14 shapes, 4 colors

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Table Unit Blocks

Table Unit Blocks are an attractive alternative to standard unit blocks. The size is 60% of the standard unit blocks and can be used in a much smaller area. As their name implies, they can easily be played with on a table. They are available in all the shapes that unit blocks are, and offer the same high quality at a lower price. The basic unit size (25mm) is approximately: 1" x 2" x 4". While they are safe for children from 18 Mos. & Up, children up to age 8 still enjoy making the large structures that are possible.

Ages: 18 Months & Up

Set Assortments

			50-6625 Set I	50-6626 Set II	50-6627 Set III
	43032A	Half Unit Block	12	17	13
	43033A	Unit Block	6	9	24
	43034A	Double Unit Block	2	6	5
	43035A	Quadruple Unit Block			2
	43036A	Half Pillar Block	4	6	6
	43037A	Pillar Block	2	4	10
	43038A	Double Pillar Block		4	2
	43039A	Small Triangular Prism	4	4	6
	43040A	Medium Triangular Prism		4	8
	43043A	Small Cylinder	2	4	6
	43044A	Ramp Block	2	2	3
	43059A	Ellipse Block			1
	43045A	Curve Block			1
	43046A	1/4 Circular Prism			2
	43048A	Gothic Door			1
	43058A	Small Switch			1
	43049A	Large Buttress			1
	43050A	Half Arch			1
	43051A	Small Buttress			1
	43052A	Arch Block	1	2	2
	43053A	Half Circle	1	2	2
	43056A	Roof Board		6	2
	43057A	Floorboard			2
		TOTAL PIECES/SET	36	70	102

50-6625 36 Pcs, 10 Shapes

50-6626 70 Pcs, 13 Shapes

50-6627 102 Pcs, 23 Shapes

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Unit Blocks (35mm)

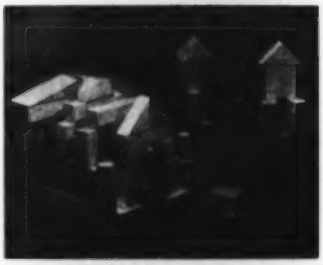
Unit blocks have been a fixture in classrooms and nursery schools for decades. The uniform shapes and sizes help young children to gain concepts from math and physics while they are playing. These are all hard maple, unfinished and splinter-free. The basic unit size (35mm) is approximately: 5 ½" x 2 ¾" x 1 ½" (an industry standard). While they are safe for children from 18 Mos. & Up, children up to age 8 still enjoy making the large structures that Unit Blocks can make.
Ages: 18 Months & Up

Set Assortments

		50-6671	50-6672	50-6673	50-6674	50-6675
43001	Half Unit Block	4	12	17	12	14
43002	Unit Block	2	6	9	10	24
43003	Double Unit Block		2	6	6	6
43004	Quadruple Unit Block				2	2
43005	Half Pillar Block	2	6	6	6	6
43006	Pillar Block	2	2	4	4	10
43007	Double Pillar Block			4	4	2
43008	Small Triangular Prism	2	4	4	6	6
43009	Medium Triangular Prism			4	4	6
43010	Small Cylinder	2	2	6	6	6
43012	Ramp Block		2	2	4	4
43013	Ellipse Block					1
43014	Curve Block				2	1
43015	1/4 Circular Prism				4	2
43016	Large Switch				1	
43017	Gothic Door				1	1
43018	Small Switch				1	1
43019	Large Buttress					1
43020	Half Arch				1	1
43021	Small Buttress				1	1
43022	Arch Block	1	1	2	2	2
43023	Half Circle	1	1	2	2	2
43024	Roof Board	1		4		2
43026	Large Arch				1	
43027	Half Circle				4	
43030	Floorboard					1
43124	Sideroad				1	
	TOTAL PIECES/SET	17	40	70	87	104

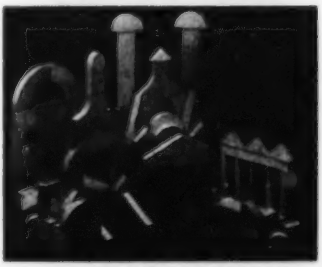
NOTE: **50-6671** 17 Pcs, 9 Shapes (NOT SHOWN)

These blocks will last for generations
Guaranteed!



50-6672 40 Pcs, 10 Shapes

50-6673 70 Pcs, 13 Shapes



50-6674 87 Pcs, 23 Shapes

50-6675 105 Pcs, 24 Shapes

Unit Architectural Blocks - Accessories

Unit Architectural Blocks - These accessory sets are designed to add architectural style to Unit Blocks. The arches, doorways, columns, and spires can turn a great structure into a magnificent one. They are also compatible with all other standard unit blocks. *Ages: 3 Yrs & Up*

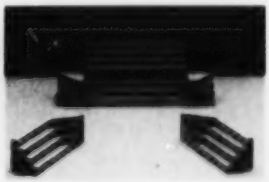
50-6686 Romantic
Unit Architectural Blocks
This set is reminiscent of the European old world styles and includes a balcony to add that extra dimension to unit block imaginative play. (17 pieces)

50-6687 Antiquity
Unit Architectural Blocks
Children will be enchanted by the grace and beauty of their buildings when they can bring a classical theme to their unit block structures.
(20 pieces)

50-6688 Middle Eastern
Unit Architectural Blocks
Spires and domes will allow kids to take unit blocks and create buildings with Arabian enchantment or structures with a whimsical twist.
(28 pieces)

Romantic Drawbridge
50-6613

Antiquity Classic Pillars
50-6621

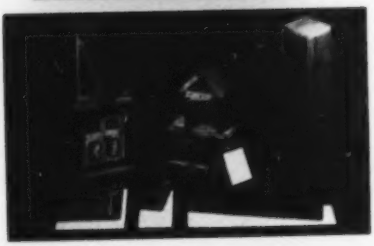


Antiquity Steps
50-6624

Hollow Blocks

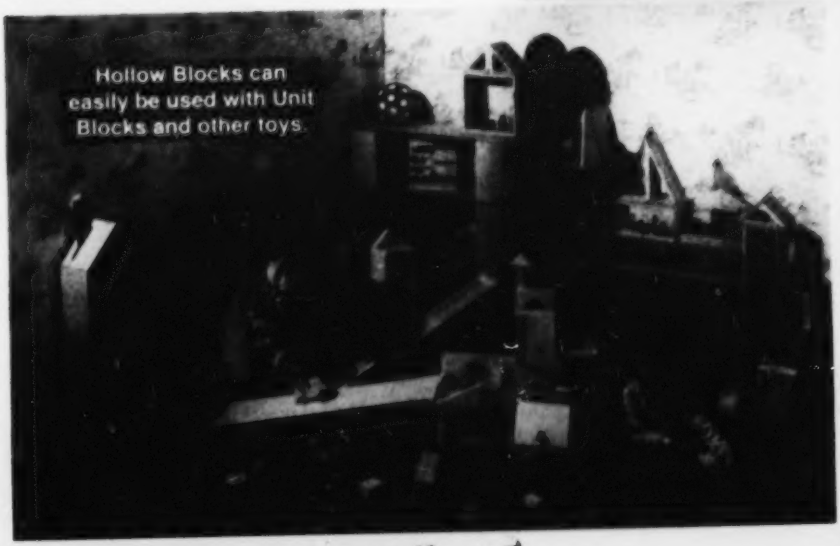
50-6677 Set I
(12 pieces)

Unit Blocks on a grand scale!
These oversize blocks are size compatible with Unit Blocks, but allow much larger structures. Projects such as a large doll houses, a ship, or a full kitchen are easily made with Hollow Blocks. The basic unit size is approx: 11" x 5 ½" x 5 ½". Designed to withstand the play of many children. *Ages: 2 Yrs & Up*



50-6900 Hollow Block Inserts
Doors, windows and brick walls add a splash of realism into any Hollow Block structure. These heavy cardstock inserts easily slide into the grooves in our Hollow Blocks. (34 pieces)

50-6679 Set III (20 pieces)



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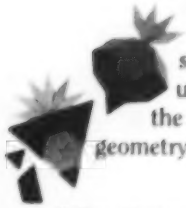
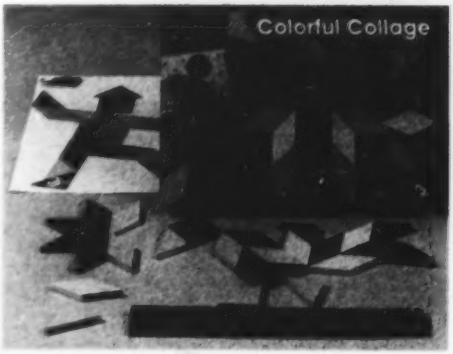
Developmental Blocks

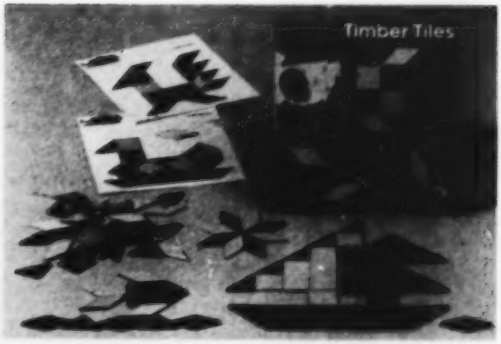


50-6818 Pattern Blocks make the integration of learning and creation possible. This is the standard assortment that is used in classrooms around the country to teach math and geometry.

Yellow Hexagons,
25 Orange Squares,
50 Green Triangles,
50 Red Trapezoids,
50 Blue Parallelograms,
50 White Diamonds
Age: 4 Yrs and Up

50-6815 Colorful Collage
Simple shapes and colorful patterns make this set a pleasure for children ages 3-5. The larger size of the pieces makes them easier to grasp and less frustrating to assemble. Comes with 28 large pieces in 6 colors and 4 pattern cards to jump-start a child's imagination.
Age: 3 Yrs and Up





50-6816 Timber Tiles
Similar to Colorful Collage (above) but with smaller pieces and more of them. 100 pieces in 6 colors with 8 pattern cards.
Age: 4 Yrs and Up

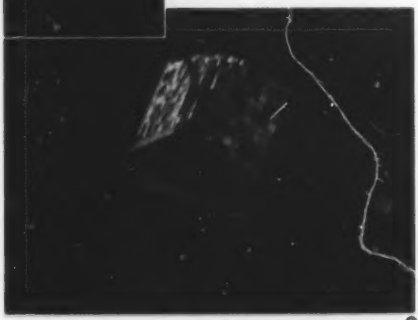
All T.C.Timber toys are Safe, Non-Toxic, and Guaranteed for Life.

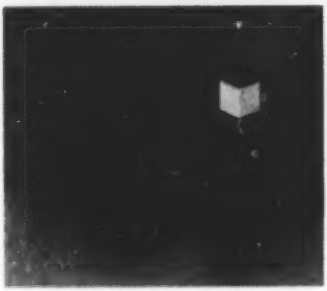
Perception Blocks

50-6766 Colored Squares
100 wooden squares in 10 different colors. Sizes from 10mm x 10mm to 100mm x 100mm. For counting, sorting, and understanding volume relationships in two dimensions. Can also be used to teach math and the metric system. *Age: 4 Yrs & Up*

50-6767 Colored Counting Bars
200 wooden bars ranging in length from 10mm to 100mm (all bars are 100m in the other two dimensions). For counting, sorting, and understanding volume relationships in one dimension. Can also be used to teach math and the metric system. *Age: 4 Yrs & Up*

50-6768 Counting Cubes
1000 wooden cubes 10mm x 10mm x 10mm, natural finish. For counting and teaching volume relationships in 1, 2, or 3 dimensions. NOTE: Volume Box with Stand (shown in inset) sold separately 50-6769. *Age: 6 Yrs & Up*





50-6765 Colored Cubes
10 different cubes in 10 colors. Sizes from 10mm# to 100mm3 in 10mm increments. For teaching volume in three dimensions. Compatible with Colored Squares and Bars. *Age: 6 Yrs & Up*

Master Builder Blocks (25mm)

Master Builder Blocks take block play to a higher level. These sets offer the child (or adult) the ability to create structures that are more complex and more true to life.

These sets are part of a system that incorporates basic block shapes with the styles and design characteristics of four distinct historical periods: Romantic, Middle Eastern, Antiquity, Russian, Japanese and Dream Castle.

Not simply for young children, the Master Builder block sets can be used by themselves, with other Master Builder sets, or with other T.C.Timber block sets (specifically the Table Unit Blocks) to create structures that are historically correct, or that pioneer new architectural styles.

Ages: 3 Yrs & Up

Basic Sets I & II

These sets offer an assortment of the basic shapes that are used to create walls and foundations in all the sets. These sets are best used to add-on to a set from a specific style.

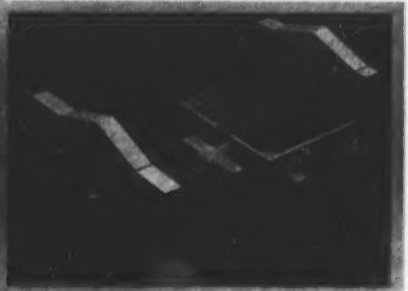
50-6629 Basic Set I
50 Pieces, 9 Shapes

50-6630 Basic Set II
100 Pieces, 20 Shapes

Antiquity Set I & II

Experience the style of some of the greatest civilizations of antiquity. Build with these sets and seize upon the concept of the "Greek Ideal", which is to grasp the essence of a form in a single glance.

50-6645 Antiquity Set I *42pcs, 14 shapes*

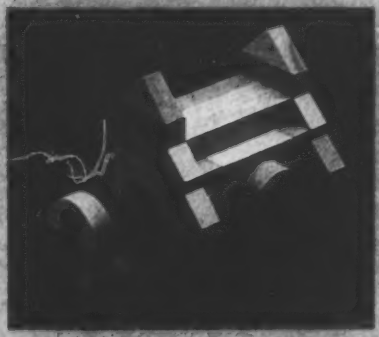


50-6646 Antiquity Set II *53pcs, 13 shapes*

Master Builder Blocks (25mm)

t.c.timber

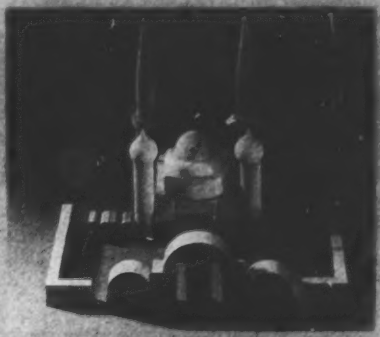
Romantic Sets I & II
You become a Master Builder from around the turn of the first millennium, building a stately castle or a soaring cathedral that will stand for centuries. Arches, columns, doors, and windows in the style of central Europe between the 9th & 12th centuries demonstrate the majesty, extraordinary beauty and craftsmanship of the time.



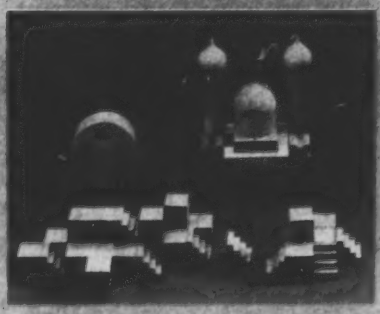
50-6635 Romantic Set I 55pcs, 11 shapes

50-6636 Romantic Set I *55pcs, 11 shapes*

Middle Eastern Sets I & II
The distinctive "onion domes" of the buildings in this style give each structure the special look of the 8th and 9th centuries in Islamic architecture. Alladin and other characters of Arabian lore come to life as you build a palace in this style, or simply add the accents to another style to give an enchanted look to it.



50-6638 Middle Eastern Set I *50pcs, 16 shapes*



50-6639 Mid. Eastern Set II *50pcs, 13 shapes*

All T.C.Timber Block sets are crafted from solid maple. All materials used are non-toxic, and will last for generations.

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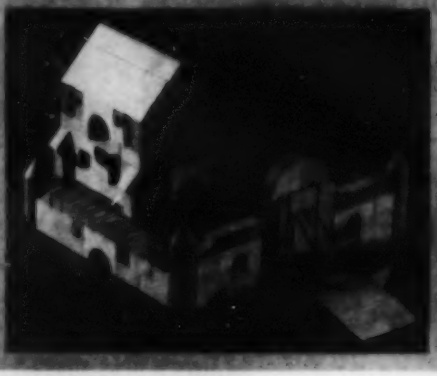
Master Builder Blocks (25mm)

Dream Castle Sets I & II
Harken back to the days of "Olde" when King Arthur and his entourage viewed the loyal subjects from the balconies or lead his brave knights accross the drawbridge on their way to heroic adventures. Experience Feudal Europe, Chivalry, the joust and other marvelous imaginings when you combine these unique castle sets.

50-6648 Dream Castle Set I (53pcs, 15 shapes)

50-6649 Dream Castle Set II
(110pcs, 21 shapes)



At left we see the result of combining both of the Dream Castle sets. The same thing can be done with any of the Master Builder sets.

Roman Arch Partially Completed

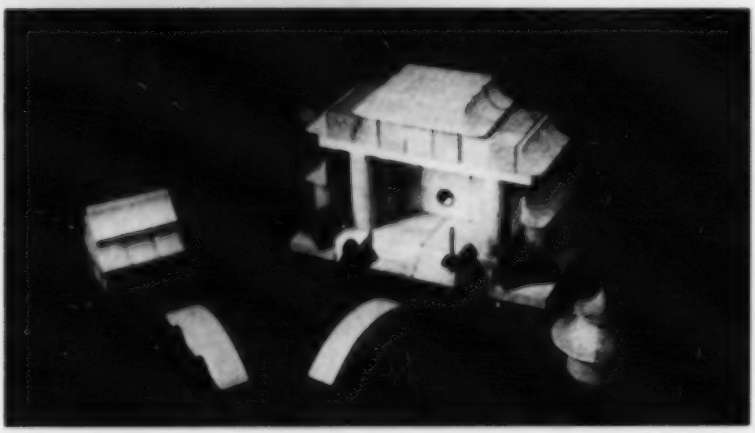
Roman Arch with Brace in place

50-6637 Roman Arch Block Set
This construction set has everything that is needed to build a scale model of a real roman arch using classical techniques. Detailed instructions are included in the set that include information on the math and physics involved. Truly an attractive hands-on teaching toy. *Ages 6yrs & Up*

Master Builder Blocks (25mm)

50-6632 Russian Blocks
The Russian Empire was vast and culturally diverse. This set combines many of the distinctive architectural elements used in Russian buildings of old. (53 pieces, 16 shapes)

50-6631 Japanese Blocks
The Far East - a land of mystery and intrigue. One of the oldest cultures in the world, also has one of the most beautiful forms of architecture. Concave roofs and ornate pagodas allow the builder to create temples, palaces, or calming formal gardens. (63 pieces, 15 shapes)



A Little History

Marshal Larrabee had originally planned to be a banker. But a bout with tuberculosis made him temporarily abandon his career in the finance industry. As part of his recuperative process, Marshal made small wooden toys for his children and the children in the neighborhood near his home in beautiful Skaneateles, New York.

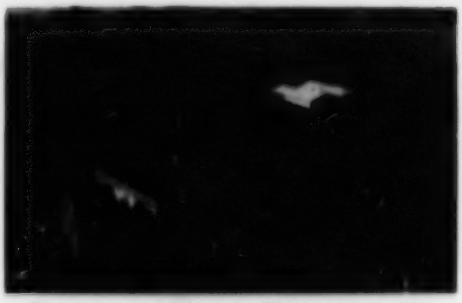
Mr. Larrabee thought that the idea might have some commercial value, so he put some of his trains into a paper bag and went to Chicago to visit Miss Kugelberg, a buyer for the Marshall Field Company. She thought that people would be happy to buy such a good toy. So, in 1936, Skaneateles Handicrafters was born.

Mr. Marshall Larrabee

During the next several years, Skaneateles Handicrafters thrived. In the early 1940's, Mr. Larrabee was issued several design patents for his wooden trains on wooden track. The crew at Skaneateles Handicrafters built a reputation for quality, and their wooden trains and track gained a reputation for durability and play value.

In 1980, Klaus Habermaass was looking for a way to diversify his family wooden toy business in Germany to the "New World". The match between Skaneateles Handicrafters and Habermaass GmbH seemed ideal. The Handicrafters plant and technical know-how combined with the experience and expertise of the German craftsmen to make a winning partnership.

Since then, we have been T.C. Timber / Habermaass Corp. With a new factory in 1981 and a few more years of working together behind us, the future looks bright. And if you're looking for the man who invented that great train set your child is playing with, you can visit him right here at the toy factory in Skaneateles. At the age of 90, Marshal Larrabee still makes sure that the rules of good quality, durability and play value are still followed.



The current factory in Skaneateles, NY

T.C.Timber/Habermaass Corporation
P.O.Box 42
Skaneateles, NY 13152
(800) 468-6873

Ask for these and other quality T.C.Timber products at your local specialty toy store. If you cannot find our products, call 1-800-468-6873 for the location of a store near you. Please visit our *Web Page* to learn more about our other fine products at **www.tctimber.com**

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